

StreetChurch

Volunteer Information Pack

November 2016

BACKGROUND TO STREETCHURCH

StreetChurch started on Easter Sunday 2008, initially for a 3-month probation period. It was soon clear by the number who came and by their positive feedback that we needed to continue. It continues to be open every Sunday 1.30-3.30 to provide food, hospitality and opportunities to share faith. It is open to all, but the majority of volunteers are members of Christian communities in Northamptonshire. Currently more than 17 churches provide food on a rota basis.

Additionally, there is a programme of social and spiritual activities, which include testimonies, DVDs, music, quizzes and regular pamper sessions (haircuts, care for nails, feet and make up.) We have held services of memorial and healing that are informal and voluntary. Mostly, we share faith through conversation and encourage individuals to attend any Bible and discussion groups arranged by StreetChurch and/or the supporting churches.

A family atmosphere has developed and Street Church has had a positive impact on the community of folk who live on, or who have lived on the streets and those battling with addictions or the aftermath of convictions. We recognize the invaluable provision by the specialist local agencies and particularly The Hope Centre (formerly The Soup Kitchen). We point people to these organisations for practical and medical needs and counselling. There are limited opening hours and nothing is available at weekends. Also, due to the professional nature of the agencies, they are not able to provide the informal friendship or aftercare that people need, such as getting to an appointment, making a flat a home, talking through their journey of faith.

StreetChurch Mission Statement

'Good news for the poor, the captives, the broken hearted, the mourning.'

Our aims are:

- To demonstrate God's love by feeding hungry bodies and souls.
- To reflect God's invitation to all, by giving vulnerable people the best hospitality and warmest welcome.
- To give hope and the opportunity to express faith and to help others find it.

We believe that Jesus is especially close to those whose hearts and lives are broken; we meet Him in our interactions with those who come to StreetChurch and with each other.

There are many scriptural references that motivate our work:

'For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.' Luke 19:10

'Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.' Luke 14:21

'The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor, He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed...' Luke 4:18

'...I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.' John 10:10

'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.' Matthew 25:40

Volunteering at StreetChurch

The volunteers who work at StreetChurch contribute and enhance the services offered in a unique and selfless way. Without your help, it would simply not be possible to provide the services that we do.

Whatever your reasons for volunteering for StreetChurch, whatever service area you work in, and however much time you are able to give, your help is invaluable and very much appreciated. Whilst the volunteers and members of StreetChurch are always grateful for your contribution, they may not always have the time to acknowledge this fact, so on behalf of everyone who works and comes to StreetChurch, we would just like to say thank you in advance for your time and effort.

The qualities you will need:

- You must be at least 18 years old.
- Experience of working with homeless people is not essential, but you must have empathy and a non-judgemental attitude and be prepared to be flexible in your approach. Reliability and punctuality are also important.
- **StreetChurch is a Christian organisation and each volunteer should have the support of their church leader.**

Training

All volunteers are expected to attend the 'Equip' training course and any other training deemed appropriate.

Please note: *Many of our service users have mental health problems or issues related to alcohol and drug abuse. An awareness of this, and appropriate on-going training will help you allay any fears or concerns you might have.*

Volunteer roles

Volunteers can be identified by badges they are wearing – red denotes a first aider, yellow are kitchen volunteers and white are general volunteers. Volunteers are needed to fulfil a number of roles and we will always try to find jobs based around a person's gifting unless they want to try something new. Jobs need to be carried out on an average Sunday include:

- 1:1 with members
- Supportive kitchen duties with the on duty catering team
- Musicians
- Prayer supporters
- Befrienders who come to listen and chat
- General clean up
- Hairdressers, stylists, manicurists, barbers

The programme varies from week to week with testimonies, remembrance and thanksgiving services, music, quizzes, inspirational videos, pampering sessions and even magic shows!

There are plans to expand our services towards befriending and mentoring. This will be evolving and will obviously require different skills and commitments but still seen as an extension of what we set out to do on Sundays. An addendum will be submitted to the Volunteer Information Pack at the appropriate time.

What is expected of you:

- You will be expected to comply with all Health & Safety rules and follow the directives of StreetChurch
- Some volunteers may be required to undergo an enhanced DBS check, depending on the nature of the volunteer role.
- You will be expected to act in a responsible manner whilst at StreetChurch or acting on its behalf and not in a manner that will prejudice or bring StreetChurch into disrepute
- No volunteer should undertake any activity in the name of StreetChurch out of StreetChurch time without the agreement of the StreetChurch Chaplains or a Steering group member.
- You will need to respect each person, treating them in an appropriate manner, and at all times maintain confidentiality between yourself and members
- You will be asked to provide the name and address of two referees. These need not be professionals, but must not be members of your family; someone who knows you well will suffice. **One of these needs to be the senior leader of your church, although they may choose to consult or delegate to another leader in the church who might know you better.**

What volunteers do at StreetChurch (Sunday)

Pre-meeting (1.00-1.30)

- From 1.00 we set out the room, make sure the kitchen is staffed, chat to any early birds, and pray!
- We usually have out a notice board, prayer board, the cross and have a prayer corner in the room as well.
- Check whether help is needed in the kitchen, especially in the first half hour: putting food on serving plates, getting it out, serving tea, coffee or washing up.

During the meeting (1.30-3.00)

- Provide any necessary assistance to the catering team on duty
- Feel free to eat with the guests as part of the 'family' ethos; along with this, we would naturally hold back if it looks as if food might run out!
- Support whatever activities are on – whether, testimonies, films, music, talks, we direct our attention and those around us to what is going on. We follow up any input with individuals.
- Consider going outside to those who need or prefer to be there. Encourage them to come indoors
- Befriending: this is a question of looking around and seeing where individuals might be on their own or where there is a table without any helpers (identifiable by their badges). If there are a lot of us, you might want to chat in pairs.
- Conversation will be natural. We all know that we introduce ourselves and then the other person can volunteer their name. Continuity is ideal so that we can pick up with people the week after. We keep confidences but if you are concerned about what someone is sharing then do check it out with one of the regular team.
- To protect both volunteers and members, we do not give out personal information so that relationships remain in the context of StreetChurch (some team members have professional roles outside of our meetings which enables them to do follow up work).
- There are leaflets we can use to help explain the gospel and for individuals to take away.
- Prayer. We pray in two's for someone and the room opposite the chair store (meeting room 2 – second door on the right down the corridor to the toilets) is where people can meet more privately and quietly for prayer.

Post-meeting (3.00 - 3.30)

- We need to see everyone out, clear up (including outside) and sweep, mop and vacuum the floors!

Boundary Guidelines Between Volunteers And StreetChurch Members

The guests attending StreetChurch are vulnerable adults and due to the nature of their addictions are not always in control of their actions. Calm situations can quickly become difficult and it is important that you have the support of other volunteers available at all times, not just to prevent physical abuse but as a witness to protect you against any false accusations.

You also need to remember that vulnerable adults may not react in a manner that you would expect from others.

Your actions may be good but they can be perceived differently from how you intended – what is intended as good may be perceived as harassment. It is not uncommon for vulnerable people to twist things to boost their self-esteem, to gain leverage over volunteers or even to make claims for compensation. Boundaries are there not just to protect the guests but also you as a volunteer and StreetChurch as a whole. They must be observed at all times.

The following are basic common sense guidelines when working with or in contact with StreetChurch members. Please treat them with the seriousness due to them, but note that they supplement rather than replace the procedures laid down in the Health & Safety Policy, Practices and Working Procedures Document

- Never give your address or telephone number to a member
- Never gift a lift to a Street Church member without another trusted adult in the car
- Never agree to meet a member outside StreetChurch without first discussing it with one of the leaders who will assess the suitability of the arrangements
- In the event of a violent or potentially violent situation in StreetChurch, your only responsibility is to make yourself safe by getting out of the area. If the alarm has not been raised, then do so, and leave the appropriate staff to deal with the situation
- Notify staff immediately if a member is behaving in a threatening or abusive way towards you
- Never give a member money
- If you wish to donate clothes/blankets etc. to members, do not hand them out individually, take them to a leader where they are given out fairly
- Do not dress provocatively whilst at StreetChurch, or act in an over friendly or intimate way. You may give the service user the wrong message
- Do not enter into a close personal relationship with a StreetChurch member/guest

If you find yourself in danger of crossing any of the above boundaries you are required to discuss the situation with one of the StreetChurch leaders or a member of the Steering group. Depending on the exact circumstances you may have to stand down from being a volunteer.

Members Rules

Much as many people dislike rules they are a necessity to ensure that everybody is treated fairly and that boundaries are drawn, recognised and adhered to and to ensure that an organisation can function efficiently. These are the rules that have been drawn up for StreetChurch:

- Please remember that this building is a church and should be respected as such by all those that visit

- Please show respect to fellow members and staff and treat them as you would wish to be treated
- No alcohol or drugs should be brought into StreetChurch
- Smoking is prohibited on the premises
- No weapons are allowed at StreetChurch
- No animals should be brought into StreetChurch
- Please refrain from swearing
- Please be polite
- Abusive language, violence or threats will not be tolerated
- If you are drunk or seriously under the influence of drugs/solvents etc. which could be a risk to other members or staff you will be asked to leave or denied entry

Equal Opportunities Policy

Statement of Policy

StreetChurch is committed to ensuring that all individuals and groups are treated fairly and valued equally. This organisation's policies will be governed by this commitment in its dealings with its own workforce, with volunteers, clients and all with whom it has contacts or dealings.

This equality policy and principles will apply to all, and StreetChurch will do its best to provide an example of good practice to the community at large.

StreetChurch will oppose discrimination against any individual or group specifically on the grounds of race, ethnic or national origin; religion or creed; disability or impairment; gender, sexual orientation or marital status; employment status; social class; HIV status; age; dependant-care responsibilities or need; appearance or size; unrelated criminal conviction or on any other unjustified grounds.

No-one, whether member, volunteer or staff member of StreetChurch will receive less favourable treatment, or will be disadvantaged by unjustifiable requirements or conditions. Our aim is to eliminate unfair discrimination.

Note on the Legal Background

The question of discrimination is referred to in the following Acts:

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Sex Discrimination Acts 1975 & 1986
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Trade Union and Labour Relations Act 1974/6
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Age discrimination Act 2006

Where discrimination occurs on the basis of race, colour, disability or impairment, sex/marital status union membership, individuals have the right to apply to the Courts which can provide redress.